

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 9-11 and 13-19 remain active in this case, Claims 12 and 20 have been previously canceled without prejudice, and Claims 1-8 are canceled without prejudice by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-3 and 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Horimai (US Patent 7,002,891 B2) in view of Kuroda (US Patent 5,576,084). Claims 4-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Horimai and Kuroda and further in view of Tsukamoto (US Patent 7,042,824 B2). However, Claims 9-11 and 13-19 were indicated as allowed.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation allowance for Claims 9-11 and 13-19. In order to expedite prosecution of the present application, rejected Claims 1-8 are canceled without prejudice by the present amendment.

This amendment is submitted in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.116, which after final rejection permits canceling claims. It is therefore respectfully requested that the present amendment be entered under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussions, it is believed that the outstanding rejection is overcome, and the application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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